

February 24, 2014

The Village Pond Park Project is a complex project that involves a number of different tasks which include: adoption of a Consensus Master Plan that shows all the improvements that will be constructed in the park; updating and revising the contractual obligations between the City and the Lake Forest Community Association (“HOA”); resolving water quality issues; and, measures to control the waterfowl population.

At its November meeting, the Parks and Recreation Commission received a presentation on the Preliminary Master Plan for potential improvements to Village Pond Park. The proposed Preliminary Master Plan was the result of several community meetings where residents expressed their desire to preserve the overall character of the park and pond, but improve existing conditions. Based upon well-defined public input, Nuvis, the City’s design consultant, proposed a passive park plan that included features designed to enhance the appearance and utility of the park while simultaneously discouraging the overpopulation of waterfowl. Approaches and design features proposed by Nuvis include: creating entry plazas; controlling access with low fences; adding trees; reducing the amount of turf; replacing vegetation with plant species that are not favored by waterfowl; replacing the pond filtration system; creating a floating island; adding geyser fountains in the pond; removing the concrete sidewalk around the pond; and, renovating the edge treatment.

Nuvis is currently working on finalizing an estimate of probable costs for the proposed improvements. Staff intends to present the Preliminary Master Plan to the City Council for review and approval, along with the statement of probable costs, at a future meeting. To view the Preliminary Master Plan, and presentations made to the Parks and Recreation Commission on-line, please visit the City’s website at

[http://www.lakeforestca.gov/depts/cs/village\\_pond\\_park.asp](http://www.lakeforestca.gov/depts/cs/village_pond_park.asp).

The City and the Lake I Community Association have an existing contractual relationship regarding the pond and its maintenance; the agreement originally executed between the County and the City dates back to 1976 prior to the City’s incorporation. The City assumed the County’s obligations when it incorporated. Under terms of the agreement, the City is responsible for supplying water to the pond, but the Association is responsible for maintaining the pond’s water quality. Consequently, meetings are underway to discuss conceptual terms for a new agreement.

Mitigating and controlling the waterfowl population is a key component of the City's and community's desire to improve the park and pond. There are a number of alternatives and "best practices" used by other cities and jurisdictions to address waterfowl over-population. Generally wildlife experts recommend physically modifying the park habitat and Nuvis has incorporated a number of measures through the design process to create a less-attractive habitat for birds. Another possible alternative presented to the City Council was the potential adoption of an ordinance to prohibit the feeding of wildlife in public places. The draft ordinance was presented for City Council consideration in November 2013. Based upon City Council input, consideration of adopting an ordinance was postponed until after a more comprehensive evaluation of alternatives and tasks was performed. In addition, to control waterfowl over-population, there are a number of strategies the City is evaluating including: using decoys of predators such as coyotes; temporarily draining the pond; replacing eggs with plastic ones; and, humane techniques for limiting reproduction to mitigate over-population. These potential strategies will be revisited and presented for City Council consideration as part of the Council's review of the Preliminary Master Plan. Staff will continue its efforts, in conjunction with Nuvis, to explore viable options for mitigating and managing the waterfowl population.

The intention is to advance all these tasks in order for staff and Nuvis to make a comprehensive presentation for City Council consideration in conjunction with the mid-term review of Capital Projects, which is anticipated to occur this summer. The presentation will include proposed physical improvements to the park along with recommended strategies to eliminate the over-population of waterfowl. At that time, staff would also provide recommendations on a new agreement with the HOA that better outlines respective roles and responsibilities

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Gary Magill, Community Services Director, at (949) 461-3413, or by email at [gmagill@lakeforestca.gov](mailto:gmagill@lakeforestca.gov).